

D-8162

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE.  
**CONFIDENTIAL**

File No.....

**REPORT**

S.1. Special Branch

Date October 29, 1937

Subject Norman Christopher Begley - enlistment into British Regular Army

Made by D.S. Larby Forwarded by

Relative to the communication, dated October 19, from the Staff Officer of the Shanghai Volunteer Corps, requesting information about a British subject, one N.C. Begley who has applied for enlistment in the Regular Army, the following information is now submitted.

Norman Christopher Begley who is registered at H.B.M. Consulate-General as a British subject, was born in Hongkong on the 15 Janua. '913 and is of British parentage. His father Mr. A.J. Begley who is now deceased, was formerly a chief engineer in the employ of the Indo-China Steam Navigation Company Ltd., while his mother died in Hongkong in 1920.

Educated at Taunton School, Somersetshire, Begley was obliged to curtail his scholastic studies for financial reasons and returned to Shanghai in 1929 where he obtained employment as a junior clerk in the firm of Hugh Middleton and Company, (Insurance) Ltd. In 1930 he was dismissed from this company because of his continued failure to conform to the rules of timekeeping laid down by the firm. By September, 1930, Begley was able to secure temporary employment as an audit clerk with the Hongkong Shanghai Hotels Ltd.; in December, 1930, on the termination of this appointment, Begley left Shanghai and proceeded to Singapore, ostensibly in search of employment which he was unsuccessful in obtaining.

In May 1931, Begley returned to Shanghai and in July of the same year was appointed an audit clerk in the firm of Thomson & Company, Chartered Accountants, which firm he continued to serve until December 1932 when he was dismissed for indulging in frivolity when supposedly checking the accounts of a well known organization. Prior to this episode, Begley had become

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Staff Officer  
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acquainted with a British subject, one C.Y. Jones, who was operating what purported to be a debt collecting agency. On the instigation of Jones, Begley negotiated on behalf of the agency a loan of \$500.00 with a certain Sikh moneylender, Jones acting as guarantor. The money thus obtained was deposited in a bank in a current account on which either of the depositors could draw. Though this loan was ostensibly for the use of the agency, it was in fact utilized by Jones for the settlement of certain of his more pressing private debts. Difficulties regarding the settlement of this loan eventually arose, the culminating point, in so far as Begley was concerned, being reached when the latter's former landlady took legal action in an effort to recover arrears of rent which Begley averred Jones had promised to pay. This action was finally settled in a satisfactory manner. Though Begley undoubtedly was extremely foolish to have ever permitted himself to indulge in the monetary transactions which he did, there is little doubt that Jones, who is possessed of an extremely plausible tongue, was primarily responsible for Begley's difficulties.

Reverting to his normal business activities, in March 1933, Begley obtained employment in the costing department of the Texas Company (China) Ltd., from where owing to staff reductions, he was dismissed in September 1934. Between the latter month and December, 1934, Begley was temporarily employed by Reuters Ltd. for the purpose of assisting in the broadcasting of the stock market bulletins.

From January, 1935 until June of the same year, Begley was without regular employment; in the latter month, however, he secured a post in the accounts department of the General

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Electric Company of China Ltd. from where he was dismissed in September, 1936. The reason for his dismissal is said to have been due to the lack of respect shown to his superiors.

After another period of unemployment, in December, 1936, Begley succeeded, in spite of keen competition, in obtaining a post in the accounts department of the China Printing and Finishing Company Ltd. by whom he was dismissed in September, 1937 owing to his repeated failure to settle an outstanding account with Whiteaway, Laidlaw & Company Ltd. Since the latter date Begley has been without employment and has been residing at 356 Rue Bourgeat, his incidental expenses being met by a friend of long standing, one U.V.F. Spink.

While his dismissals from firms and organizations of good standing tend to show that Begley lacks the requirements necessary to enable him to hold a position of responsibility, yet, judging by the information supplied the undersigned by certain of his past employers, the impression gained is that Begley's chief failing has been a marked inability to observe the rules and discipline to which every employee in a business of good repute must conform.

Enquiries both in the International Settlement and in the French Concession reveal Begley to have been not only a habitue of the local cabarets and dance halls but also a follower of Hai Alai and dog racing at the Auditorium and the Canidrome respectively. To his credit, however, it must be said that during the past year, he appears to have made a very determined effort to free himself from the aforementioned influences.

To sum up, as a result of an interview with the applicant, the undersigned has formed the opinion that the primary cause of

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Begley's past behaviour has been due to the entire absence since an early age of a normal home life and the restraining influences which such a life can be expected to exercise on an individual. In his favour, it should be noted that Begley is athletically minded and is actively interested in Rugby football, and in past seasons has been a regular member of the Association Sportive Francaise rugby team. He is a good badminton player while his swimming is well above the standard of the average man. Despite careful enquiry, the applicant does not appear to possess any vices which will not be quickly eradicated by the discipline of the British Regular Army.



D. S.

D.C. (Special Branch).

*From*

Ref: C.49/4.

**HEADQUARTERS.  
SHANGHAI VOLUNTEER CORPS.**

*Shanghai, 19th October, 1937.*

*To Deputy Commissioner,*

*Special Branch, S.M.P.*

CONFIDENTIAL.

Subject: N.C. BEGLEY - ENLISTMENT INTO  
REGULAR ARMY.

N.C. BEGLEY, who was recently a temporary enlistment in the Transport Company, S.V.C., has applied to enlist in the Regular Army.

I should be grateful if you could give me any information as to the previous character, antecedents, &c. of this man.

N.C. BEGLEY was recently employed by the China Printing & Finishing Company and is now believed to be unemployed.

*W. H. W.*

Captain,  
Staff Officer,  
Shanghai Volunteer Corps.

*S. S. Larby*  
*C 19/10*

*Sr*

*CPA*



*DBR*  
*19/10*